

# UnMASKing: Using Covid-19 to engage young people in human rights education



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Co-sponsored and funded by the Soroptimists-Netherlands



# Where are we?

Please use the chat box to indicate from which city and country you are joining this webinar.

# Definition

(UN Declaration on  
Human Rights  
Education and  
Training, 2011)

HRET comprises **all** educational, training, information, awareness-raising and learning activities

aimed at promoting universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms

and thus contributing to, inter alia, **the prevention of human rights violations and abuses**

by providing persons with **knowledge, skills and understanding** and developing their attitudes and behaviors, to empower them to contribute to the building and promotion of a universal culture of human rights (Article 2, para 1).

# Definition

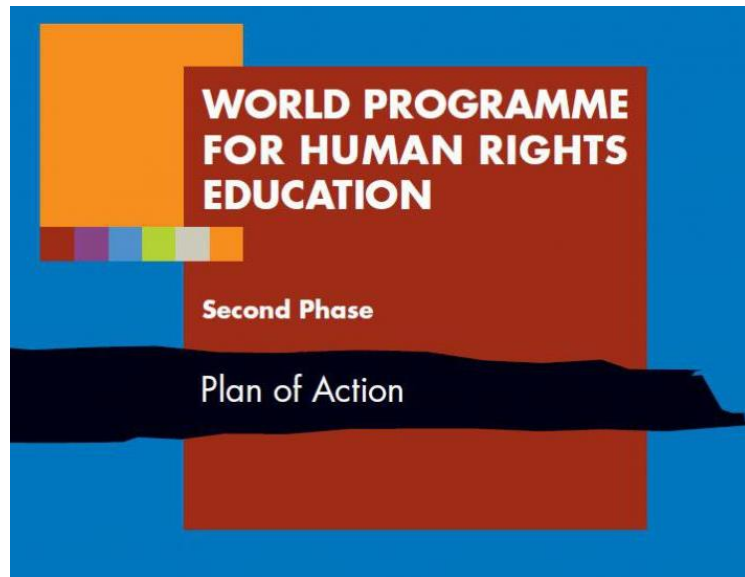
Human rights education and training encompasses:

a) Education *about* human rights, which includes providing knowledge and understanding of human rights norms and principles, the values that underpin them and the mechanisms for their protection;

(b) Education *through* human rights, which includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners;

(c) Education *for* human rights, which includes empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others. (United Nations General Assembly 2011, Article 2)

# World Programme for Human Rights Education



**Phase 1:** The schooling system

**Phase 2:** University level and professional trainings institutions, teachers, law enforcement officials and civil servants

What are  
some human  
rights issues  
in schools?

?

(type your response in the chat box)



# What are some human rights issues in schools?

- Immigration, newcomers and refugees
- Violence
- Lack of opportunities for participation of teachers and students in decision making processes
- Discipline policies and use of corporal punishment
- Free speech vs. hate speech
- Black Lives Matter



Opportunities  
to discuss  
human rights  
links with  
REAL  
problems

## Samuel Paty's murder for showing a cartoon of the Prophet Mohammed

*Freedom of speech versus offending some people's belief systems*

"The Netherlands stands firmly behind teachers and the constitutional freedom of expression," the Education Ministers Ingrid van Engelshoven and Arie Slob wrote in a letter to the education sector.

"Teachers must be able to do their job in freedom and security so that our children and young people can develop into independent citizens who can live together in a country characterized by freedom, equality and solidarity." (*Volkskrant*, 2 Nov 2020)



# The Pandemic – Global Education Emergency

- At the height of Covid-19, 192 countries shuttered schools, leaving 1.6 billion students without in-person learning, said Henrietta Fore, executive director of the United Nations Children's Fund.
- "At least 24 million children are projected to drop out of school due to Covid-19," she added. (Sept. 15, 2020, CNBC)



# The Pandemic

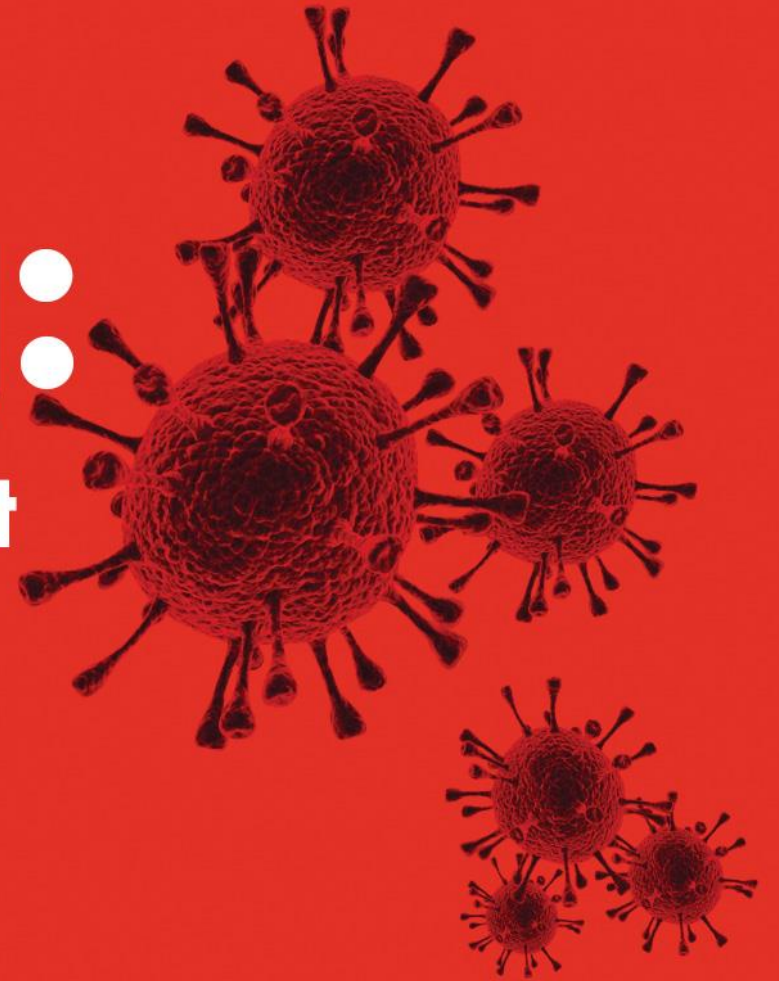
How can we use this crisis to introduce a human rights perspective?

How can we support young people experiencing different forms of lockdown, disruptions and stress within their families?

# unMASKing:

## The Pandemic Curriculum Project

Exploring the Impact, Sharing the Experience



# Background

The main aim of this curriculum is to support junior and secondary school students in applying a human rights lens in analyzing and acting upon shared experiences during this pandemic period.

The curriculum was developed in the past months to encourage middle and high school students to investigate the pandemic through a human rights lens.

Students also connect with their peers around the world who are facing challenges, enabling students to recognize the similarities and unique situations with their peers who may look and dress differently than them.



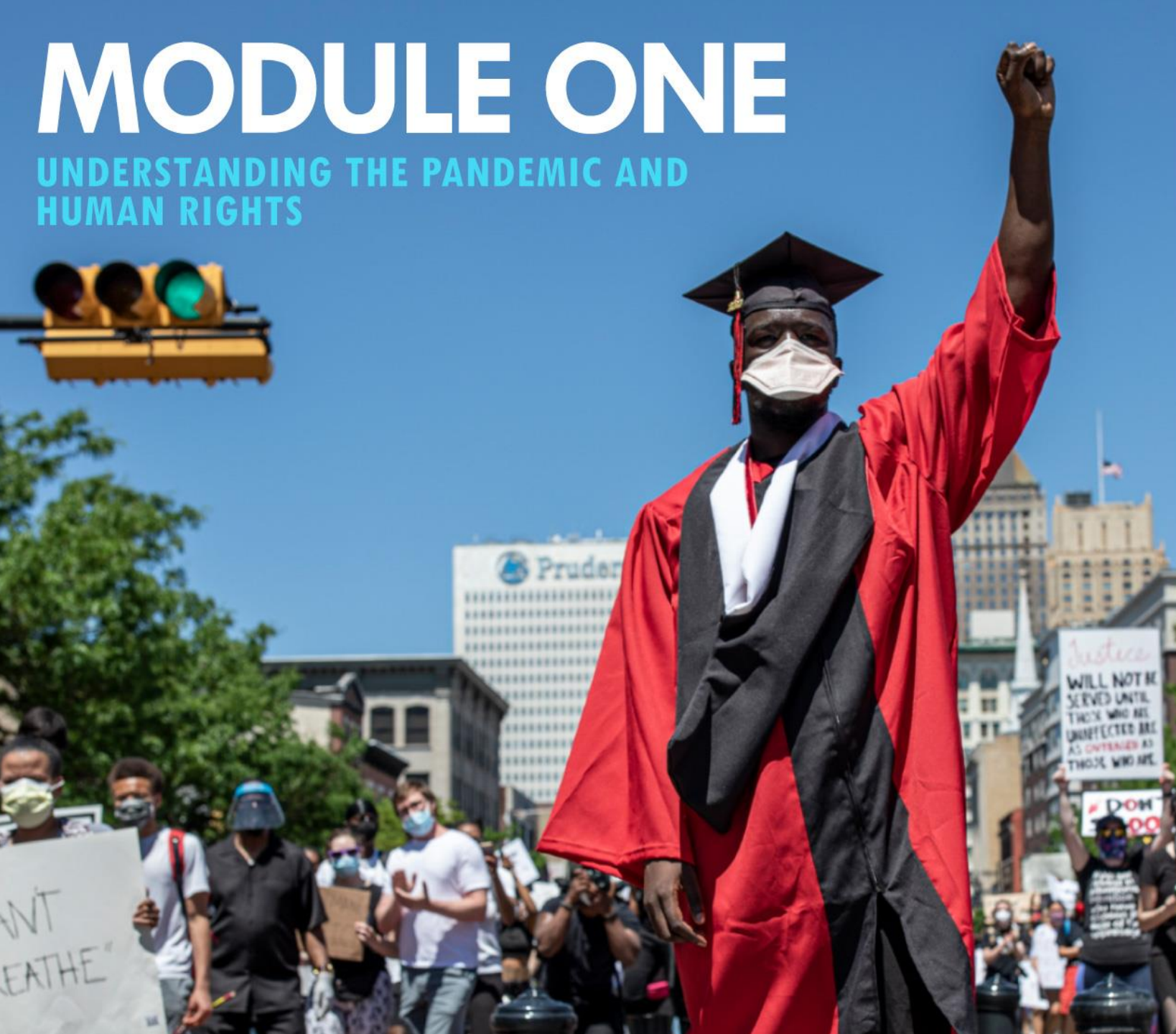
**Generation Human Rights (GenHR)** engages youth locally and globally through multidisciplinary curricula and custom education programs that empower youth to chart a world free from human rights abuse and genocide. GenHR works with educators and youth in their classrooms and in refugee settings, post-conflict zones, and in the wake of natural disasters.



**Human Rights Education Associates (HREA)** is an international non-governmental organization that supports human rights education, the training of human rights defenders and professional groups, and the development of educational materials and programming. HREA is dedicated to quality education and training to promote understanding, attitudes and actions to protect human rights, and to foster the development of peaceable, free, and just communities.

# MODULE ONE

## UNDERSTANDING THE PANDEMIC AND HUMAN RIGHTS



This module sets the stage for unMASKing: The Pandemic Curriculum Project. These lessons create the foundation of understanding human rights and the human rights language that will be used by the educator and students during the program. The lessons introduce students to the impacts of the pandemic through a human rights lens focusing on Healthcare, Education, and Food & Water.

# MODULE TWO

## SHARING STORIES



This module builds on the previous one by enabling students to explore local, national and global responses to the pandemic through their personal experiences and the stories shared by their peers from around the world. Students will critically reflect on their experiences and share them with their peers through photographs and written reflections. They will have the option present their work privately or publicly in classroom exhibits.

# MODULE THREE

## MEDIA SOURCES

This module facilitates students' exploration of their own sources of news and information for issues such as the pandemic. They delve into the effects of media over-saturation, and with their new skill set begin to decipher truth from non-truth and fact from opinion. The lessons guide students in evaluating varying media sources, including identifying bias, and the phenomenon of "fake news".



# MODULE FOUR

## TAKING ACTION



This module provides a “scaffolding” platform for students to work in groups and create their own action plan to promote human rights in their communities during the pandemic. Students will synthesize what they learned and transform their theoretical knowledge into action. The lessons address leadership, problem analysis (including root case analysis), and designing an action.

# HOW IS THE RIGHT TO HEALTH GUARANTEED DURING THE PANDEMIC?

This lesson focuses on the right to health during the pandemic, with attention to access to health care. The lesson begins with students recounting measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 infections.



# HOW IS THE RIGHT TO HEALTH GUARANTEED DURING THE PANDEMIC?

Students then work in small groups and analyze the responses of different countries to the pandemic, including those from the governmental and non-governmental sectors. The students will reflect on unequal access to health care, especially for vulnerable groups.





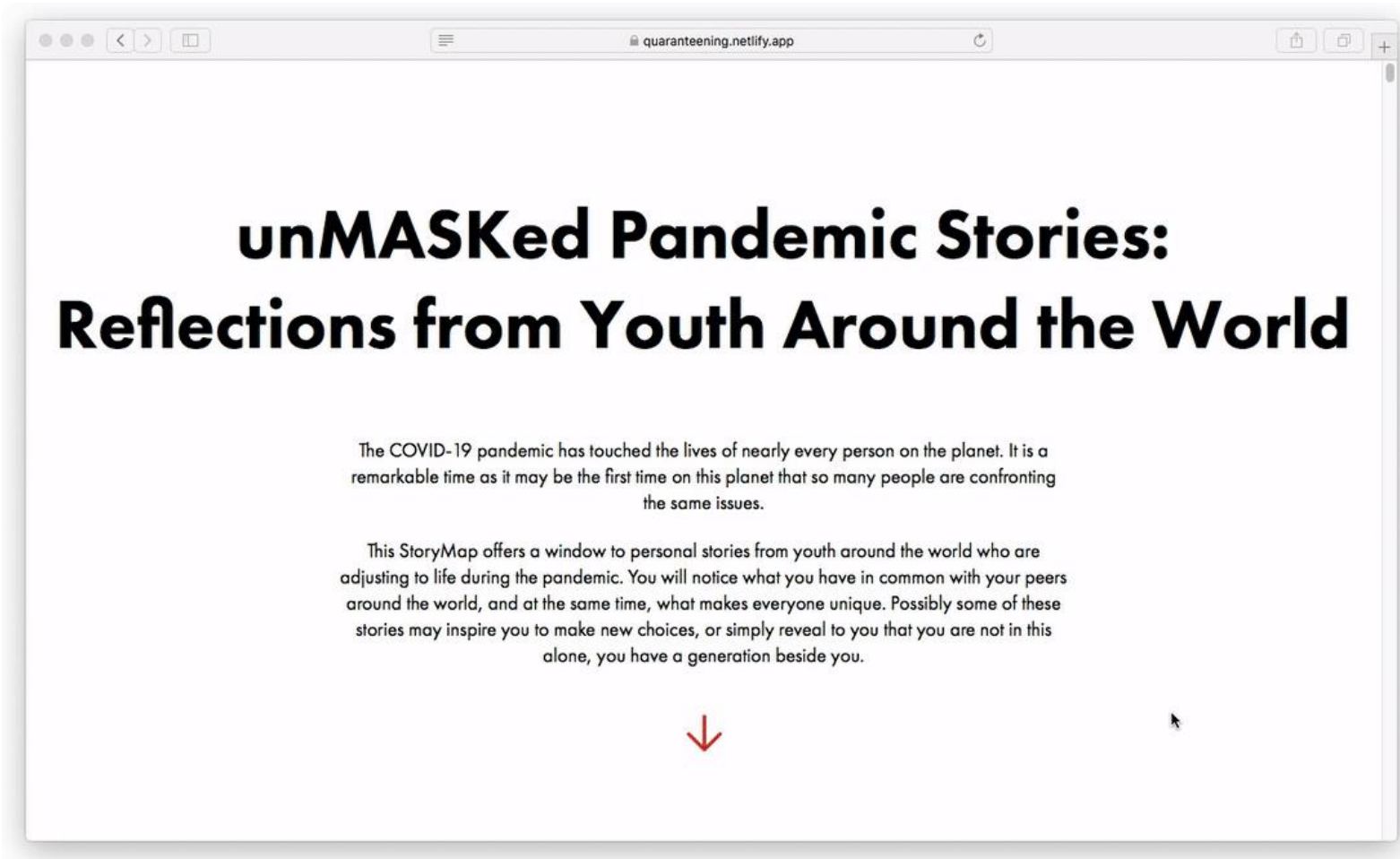
# FULFILLING THE RIGHT TO FOOD AND WATER DURING THE PANDEMIC

The lesson begins by asking students to remember the food and water that they had access to that morning. Following an introduction to the right to food and water, the students explore how the negative impacts of the pandemic are more pronounced in places where there is underlying food insecurity or a lack of potable water



# FULFILLING THE RIGHT TO FOOD AND WATER DURING THE PANDEMIC

Students will engage in case studies from Uganda and the Navajo nation through videos and written text.

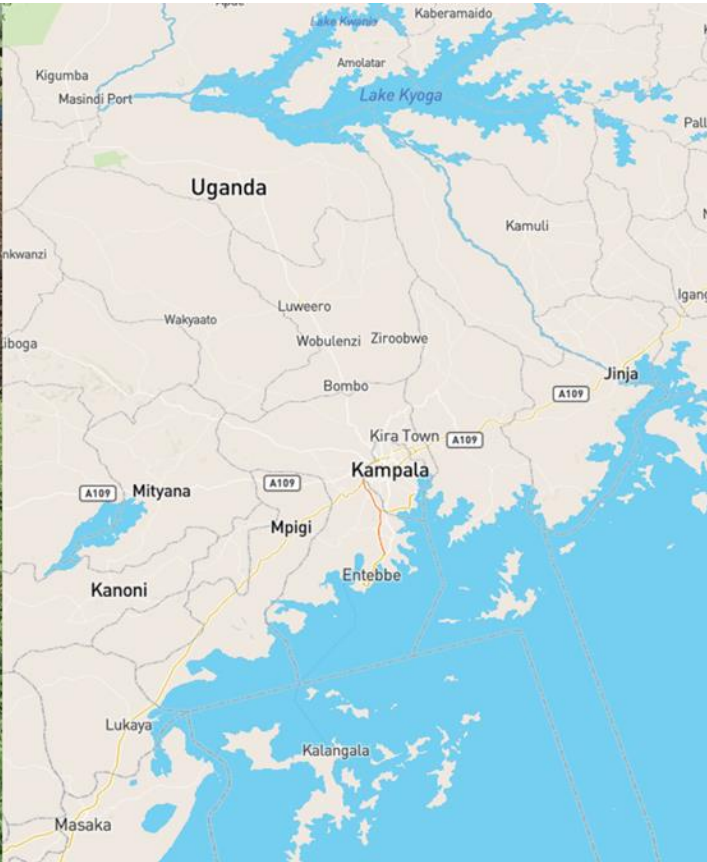


# unMASKed Pandemic Stories: Reflections from Youth Around the World

The COVID-19 pandemic has touched the lives of nearly every person on the planet. It is a remarkable time as it may be the first time on this planet that so many people are confronting the same issues.

This StoryMap offers a window to personal stories from youth around the world who are adjusting to life during the pandemic. You will notice what you have in common with your peers around the world, and at the same time, what makes everyone unique. Possibly some of these stories may inspire you to make new choices, or simply reveal to you that you are not in this alone, you have a generation beside you.





My name is Isaiah Mutungi Igumira. I would never have learned how to milk a cow if there was no quarantining. I was always in school and never had time for country life. If not for the quarantine, I would have already joined the university, which is MUN Canada but I cannot travel because of Covid travel restrictions.

**QUESTION**

Isaiah unexpectedly has learned to milk a cow. What new skill sets have you developed because of the pandemic?

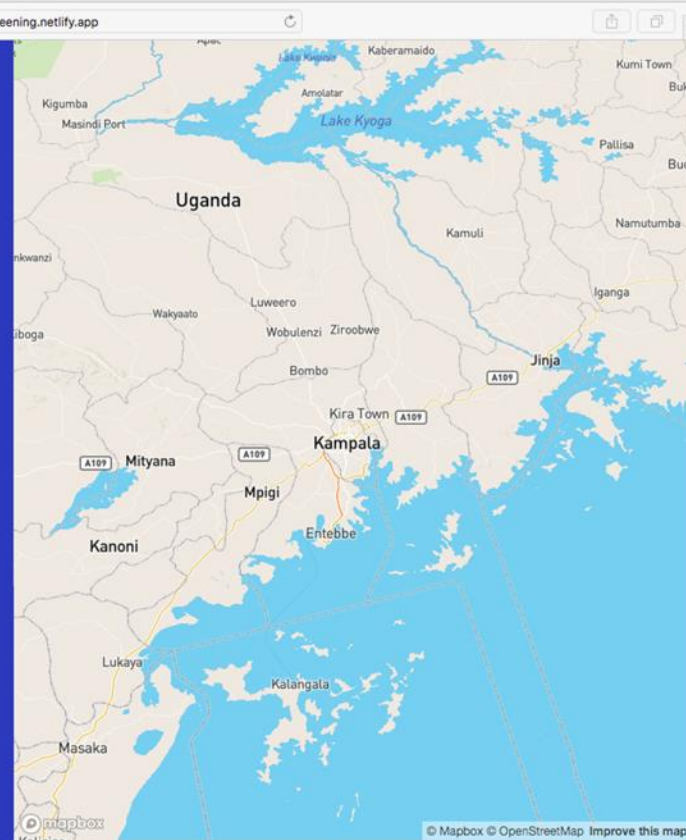


## The Bigger Picture

Uganda is in the eastern region of Africa and is landlocked, or surrounded by other countries. Kampala is the capital city and the total population of the country is over 46 million people. The Ugandan government first announced restrictions on public gatherings and enforced a lockdown on March 18. The borders were officially closed on March 23rd, only cargo was allowed, and by the end of March, Uganda adopted a nationwide curfew. The government had taken steps to distribute food packages that included posho (made from maize), beans, and salt, amongst other things, to sustain its people during the lockdown period. However, these efforts by the government were criticized for its lack of organization; transportation has been difficult and the food was not all delivered at once so people had to wait for the rest to arrive. As the pandemic has continued throughout the summer, enforcement of government restrictions and limitations have waned. The passenger limit in public transport vehicles is being ignored according to riders, and social distancing is being overlooked. As a natural outcome of looser measures, the COVID-19 cases had begun to rise.

### QUESTION

Do you think government food distribution would work in your neighborhood or community?





quaranteening.netlify.app



Photo provided by Sloane.

I am a journalism major student, currently in my senior year in Taipei, Taiwan. Living in East Asia, we confronted Covid-19 way earlier than any other region - since January. There were



quaranteening.netlify.app

# Philomène

**AGE:**  
13

**LOCATION:**  
Paris, France


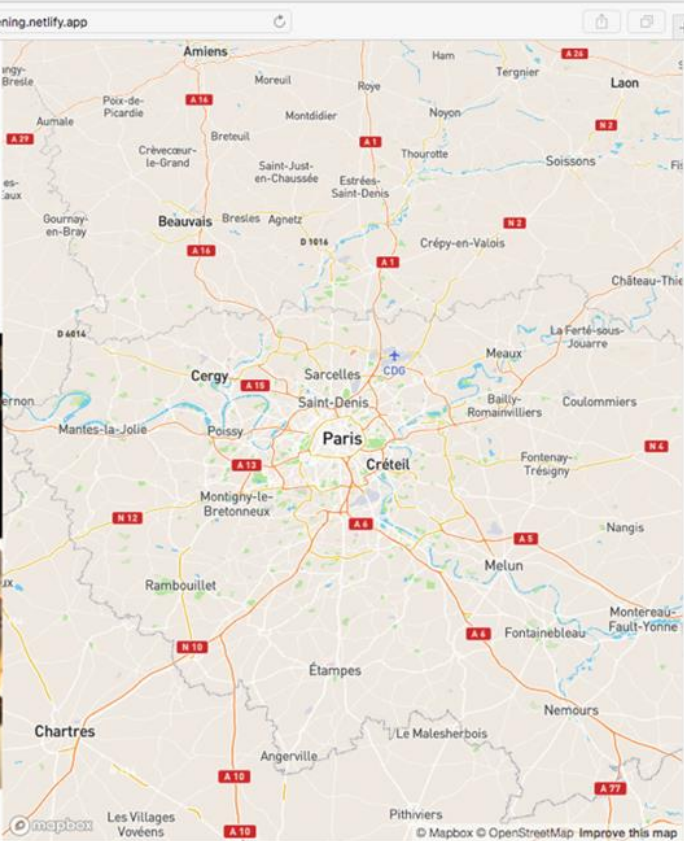


Photo provided by Philomène.



The quarantine was pretty good but I'm glad it's over! (you can check out my sister Léonie's submission to see what we did during quarantine).

I couldn't stay inside much longer without seeing my friends... I enjoy going to school a lot more now than before the pandemic as I've realized how important it is to have a routine.

It's very difficult not to be able to do « la bise ». This is the French way to say it but it's two kisses on the cheeks and is the French way of saying hello. French people will do it 100 times a day! But obviously it is not 'pandemic-friendly' so we've had to put this tradition on hold. My mom and sister currently have coronavirus.

My dad, my brother and I don't.

So, all three of us can go to school or work and my mom and sister have to quarantine in separate rooms of the house to make sure they are not in contact with us. Life is quite particular when a family member has covid.

#### QUESTION

Have you had to put any cultural traditions on hold because of the pandemic?

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# Philomène

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13

**LOCATION:**  
Paris, France


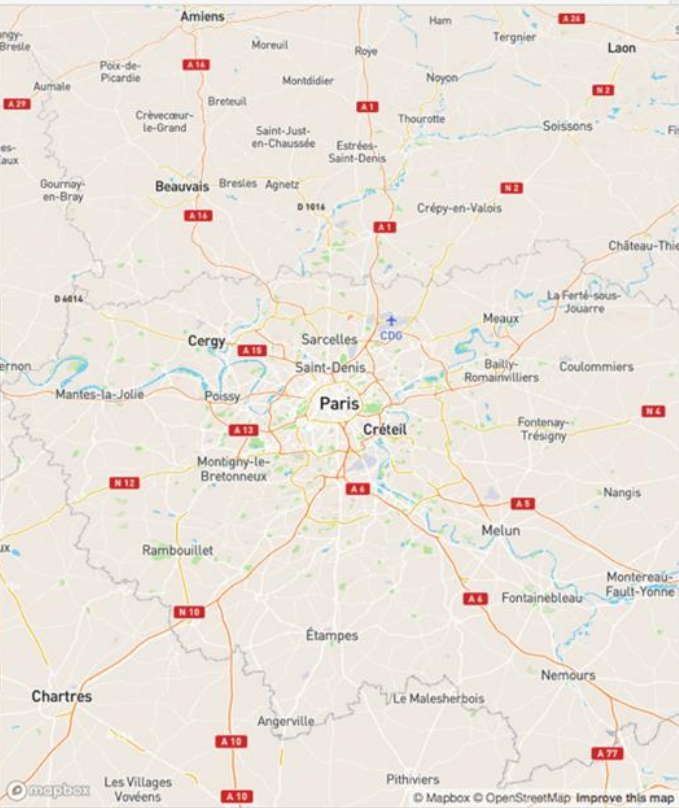


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#### QUESTION


What changes have you made in your household to take extra safety precautions?

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# Luke

**AGE:**  
17

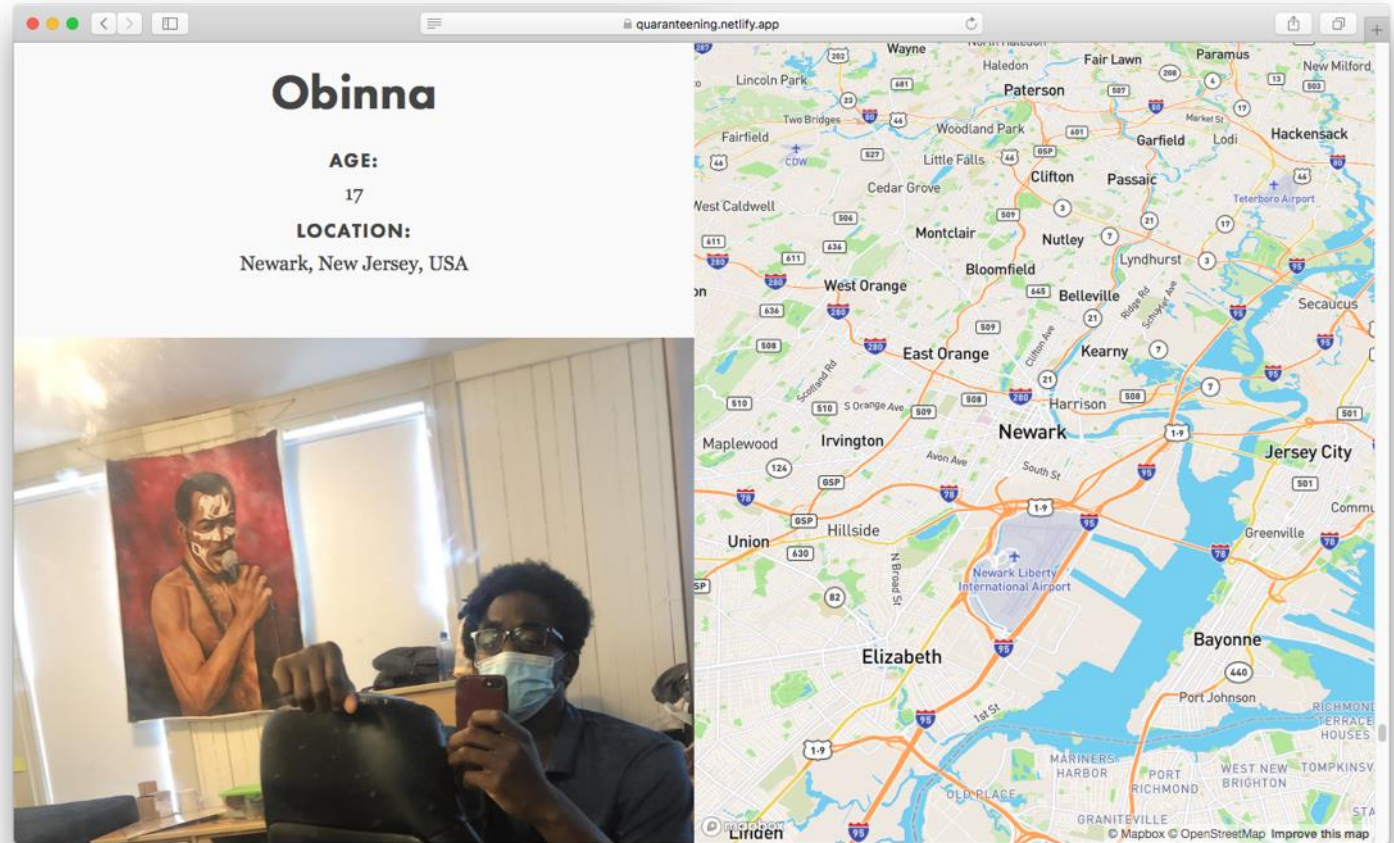
**LOCATION:**  
Charlotte, North Carolina, USA



A map of Charlotte, North Carolina, showing major highways and surrounding areas like Huntersville, Mooresville, and Rock Hill.



The world around me had gone awry and the little control over my life that I once had was non-existent. On top of the pandemic, I saw that injustices done to black people were still growing despite the crisis.





I am a 17 year old Nigerian-American, and being home has made me think hard about what that means. I have never before had to scrutinize my own mortality so closely. For me, this time has been a chance to realize that I have always looked at my privileges as givens in this life. They are not, so I am more thankful for them. With this truth, I feel grounded by a new sense of resilience.

**QUESTION**

How do you create safety and solidarity for yourself and loved ones at a time when tensions are high due to social conflict and threatening health risks?

# Some reflections on HRE during the pandemic

Both teachers and students need support

Student voices need to be heard

Multimedia can assist

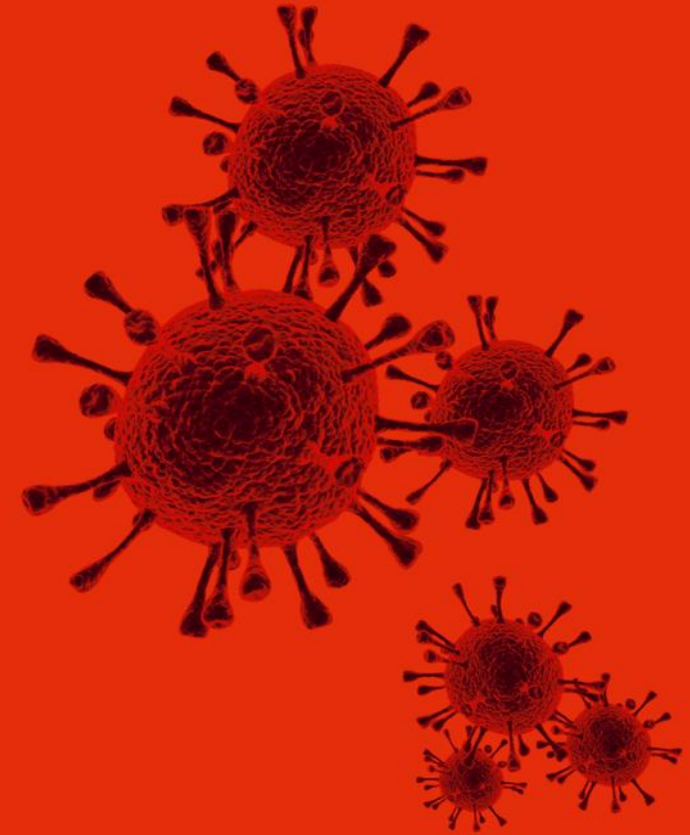
Online learning is an opportunity to make connections across time and space

HRE should be relevant to everyday life and a meaningful experience

# unMASKing:

## The Pandemic Curriculum Project

Exploring the Impact, Sharing the Experience



Felisa Tibbitts [f.l.tibbitts@uu.nl](mailto:f.l.tibbitts@uu.nl)

Location of curriculum: [generationhumanrights.org](http://generationhumanrights.org)